



**BILL RICHARDSON**  
GOVERNOR

*State of New Mexico*  
**ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT**  
*Office of the Secretary*  
*Harold Runnels Building*  
*1190 St. Francis Drive, P.O. Box 26110*  
*Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502-6110*  
*Telephone (505) 827-2855*  
*Fax (505) 827-2836*



**RON CURRY**  
SECRETARY

**DERRITH WATCHMAN-MOORE**  
DEPUTY SECRETARY

November 16, 2005  
Immediate Release

Contact: Jill Turner, NMED SWQB Outreach Coordinator  
Phone: (505) 476-1866  
Contact: Adam Rankin, NMED Communications Director  
Phone: (505) 827-0314

## **ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT PROPOSES TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOADS (TMDLs) FOR RED RIVER WATERSHED**

### **NOTICE OF 30-DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD AND COMMUNITY MEETING**

(Santa Fe, NM) — New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) invites the public to comment on draft “total maximum daily load” (TMDL) documents for the Red River watershed, defined as the Red River (Rio Grande River to the headwaters) and its tributaries. Draft TMDLs include: Acute aluminum in the Red River (Rio Grande to Placer Creek), Bitter Creek, and Placer Creek; sedimentation/siltation in Bitter Creek; and turbidity in Pioneer Creek.

A TMDL is a planning document that establishes specific goals to meet water quality standards in water bodies where pollutant limits are exceeded. It includes current pollution loadings, reduction estimates for pollutants, information on probable sources of pollution and suggestions to restore or protect the health of the waterbody

The 30-day comment period will open November 16, 2005 and will end December 16, 2005 at 5:00 p.m. MDT. Formal comments for inclusion in the public record must be submitted to the SWQB in writing, to **Jennifer Ickes at: NMED SWQB, Room N2109, P.O. Box 26110, Santa Fe, NM, 87502, by fax at (505) 827-0101, or e-mail at <Jennifer.ickes@state.nm.us>** (if possible, please submit an electronic copy in addition to paper).

NMED’s Surface Water Quality Bureau (SWQB) will approach the NM Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC) at their regular monthly meeting, tentatively set for January 10, 2005, to request

approval of the final draft Red River Watershed TMDL document. Following the close of the public comment period, copies of the final revised draft document, as amended, will be available to the public upon request and on the SWQB Web site at least 10 days prior to the WQCC meeting referenced above. For more information, or to request a copy of the TMDL, contact Jennifer Ickes at the address above, or by calling (505) 827-0101. The draft TMDLs are also posted on the Surface Water Quality Bureau's Web site at <http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/swqb>.

A public meeting will be held to summarize the information and to provide a forum for interested parties to ask questions and provide comments. The meeting date is approximately halfway through the comment period to allow the public time to review the document and generate questions or comments. The meeting will be held near Questa on November 29, 2005 from 6-7 p.m. at the US Forest Service Questa Ranger District office (one mile east of Questa, State Route 38). Formal written comments for inclusion in the public record may be submitted at this meeting as well.

Persons having a disability and needing help in being a part of this hearing process should contact Judy Bentley by November 18, 2005, at the New Mexico Environment Department, Personnel Services Bureau, P.O. Box 26110, 1190 St. Francis Drive, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 87502, telephone 505-827-9872. TDY users please access her number via the New Mexico Relay Network at 1-800-659-8331.

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